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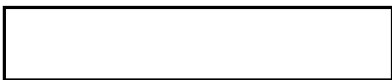
MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT   : Intelligence Requirements

Attached are the principal findings in our Survey of

Intelligence Requirements. The report will run some 230 pages

(double spaced) and will be set forth in the following chapters.

>   Introduction
>   The Problem of Priorities
>   Requirements for Human Source Collection
>   Collection Guidance
>   Overhead Reconnaissance Requirements
>   SIGINT Requirements
>   The Information Explosion
>   The Responsibilities of Management

J. S. Earman
Inspector General

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Principal Findings

1. CIA is collecting too much information--more than it can use properly, probably far more than the Government needs. Like the rest of the intelligence community it makes up for not collecting enough of the right kind of information on the most important targets by flooding the system with secondary matter.

2. The quantity of information is degrading the quality of our finished intelligence.

3. The Information Explosion has already gotten out of hand, yet CIA and the community are developing ways to intensify it. Its deleterious effects will certainly intensify as well, unless it is brought under rigorous control.

4. We find that these excesses are a direct consequence of our several independent requirements systems, wnose defects have these principal causes:

    a. No one has ever defined what the Government truly needs from the intelligence community, either as to fundamental requirements for US policy or as to what can be put to best use by the producers and readers of finished intelligence. The closest thing to a definition has been the Priority National Intelligence Objectives, a lamentably

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defective document which amounts to a ritual justification

of every kind of activity anybody believes to be desirable.

The community and CIA make their own assumptions as

to what is needed, and then do not challenge these assumptions

sufficiently.

     b. CIA's requirements for collection of information

are a catalogue of all the subjects individual consumers all

over the community have said they would like to know about.

They are an undiscriminated mixture of crucial and trivial,

appropriate and irrelevant, and are altogether too numerous

for effective action, either of collection or of production.

     c. Management at all levels has allowed this prolifera-

tion of requirements to go almost wholly unchecked.

     d. Resources for collection, especially technical

collection, greatly outweigh resources for production.

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     e. There is too little useful communication between

originators of requirements and those whose function it is

to satisfy them.

     f. The community has just begun to rationalize require-

ments, collection, and production as between various systems.

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5. At the same time we find that a number of efforts in
the field of collection guidance show encouraging signs of progress.
These include especially the work of the Collection Guidance Staff,
and comprise not only collection guidance as narrowly defined,
but operational support by the production analysts to the collectors
and recent improvements in evaluations. We find the gradually
growing ability of CIA to tailor such guidance to the capabilities
of human sources to be far more valuable than any aspect of the
formal requirements process as currently managed. In the quanti-
tatively more productive fields of overhead reconnaissance and
SIGINT, however, the community must learn to tailor its collection
requirements to the capabilities of the processors.

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6. Wherever possible we have made precise recommendations,
as for a complete overhaul of the IPC List, which is supposed to
govern the collection of information by the Clandestine Services,
and for the handling of ad hoc "numbered" requirements for collection
by human resources generally. Elsewhere we have had to be less
specific, as in suggesting means by which CIA could lead the com-
munity into a drastic revision of the Priority National Intelligence
Objectives--means which ought to involve the collective managerial
judgment of CIA in determining what we are in business for.

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7. But the most important problem of all--the insatiate

appetite which has caused the Information Explosion--would be

beyond the capacity of any team of three inspectors to solve even

if they were polymaths. We are unable to judge which or how

many among all the thousands of collection requirements are

valid; we can only observe the effects of unbridled excess. The

disease is gluttony, and a hundred bureaucratic pills to relieve

the Agency's chronic indigestion would not cure it. The will power

will have to be supplied by Agency management in a long series of

individual decisions, many of them now unforeseeable, at many

levels and probably over several years. We have nowhere recom-

mended spending more money, hiring more people, or giving away

Agency functions; even if these become necessary it is first essential

to reduce requirements.

8. The necessity for restraint is unlikely to be imposed on

the community from above, except in gross terms of budgets and

ceilings. It is even less likely to be recognized by the management

of the intelligence community outside CIA, for the military habit

of compiling encyclopedic requirements is too deeply ingrained.

(But we argue at several points that the potential influence of CIA

on the community's requirements as a whole is considerably greater

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than it has yet exerted.) It is least likely to come from inside CIA

below the upper levels, because the originators of requirements

are long since habituated to asking for too much and cannot them-

selves make the hard choices which the general excess requires.

9. The excesses of the requirements systems and some of

their more important consequences are documented in great detail

in our study, sometimes almost to the point of stupefaction. Our

best hope is that the necessity for restraint will gradually percolate

downward and outward over time. To that end we solicit the earnest

attention of the Deputy Directors and their principal subordinates,

both line and staff, to the evidence we have compiled. Specific or

general, our study and recommendations argue for the adoption, at

all appropriate levels of CIA, of the following guidelines for action

on requirements for collection of information:

> Define what we, as an Agency, believe the Govern-
> ment needs from the intelligence community.

> Challenge the community's and our own past assumptions
> as to what is needed.

> Identify the most important gaps that can be realistically
> stated in terms of collection requirements and production goals.

> Arrange these gaps in terms of collection and production
> priorities.

> Be prepared (at directorate and production office levels)
> to present these gaps and priorities to the DCI at any moment
> or at stated periods.

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Reduce the volume of requirements in order to gain more effective collection and production action.

Train the analysts to write fewer and better requirements.

Discriminate between the important and the trivial.

Adjust requirements on the several collection systems so that they complement and support each other.

Record requirements that are levied orally.

Tailor collection requirements to the capabilities of the processors and the analysts.

Make validation and coordination of requirements systematic.

Review outstanding requirements periodically.

Improve feedback from collectors to analysts and vice versa.

Systematize operational support.

Analyze the problem thoroughly--in terms of needs, priorities, and capabilities for processing and analysis-- before committing the Agency to a new collection effort.

Stop trying to cover the whole world comprehensively and superficially.

I would add as "most" important:

Determine what intelligence and to what degree fulfillment of the requirement contributes, and thus, to what activity of the U.S. Govt does such intelligence contribute and how important is that activity.

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